

California Polytechnic State University

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Cal Poly Students Collect Gifts for 600 Needy Local Children in Annual Holiday Gift Drive

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly students have collected nearly \$10,000 worth of gifts for needy children and teen-agers as part of the annual holiday gift drive on campus. students with charity gifts

Nine students have volunteered their time since September to coordinate the gift drive through the Student Community Services office at Cal Poly. The student volunteers work with local non-profit and social service programs, which provide gift requests from needy local children and teens. Students launched the annual holiday gift appeal in late November, after receiving a record number of gift requests: 600.

“Over the past four years that I’ve been working on this, we’ve gone from 200 gifts to 600 gifts this year,” said fourth-year Political Science student Dianne Hardcastle.

The requests come from children involved with Big Brothers/Big Sisters, the Housing Authority, the Family Care Network, the county Department of Social Services, and the EOC TAPP (teen parenting) program.

Student clubs, fraternities, sororities and general students on campus as well as and faculty and staff offices provide the gifts.

“They’re all great, but the College of Science and Math is one of our biggest donors – they’re fantastic,” said this year’s gift drive coordinator, third-year computer science student Alexis Ramirez.

Freshmen in the dorms also participate, either by going in together and buying gifts (price limit is \$10 to \$25 per gift) or sponsoring candy sales or other fund-raisers to buy gifts, Ramirez said.

The nine students coordinating the gift drive will spend this week wrapping last-minute gift donations and delivering them to local charities on Dec 11. Student Community Services is also sponsoring a party Tuesday night (Dec. 7) at from 6-8 p.m. at the Monday Club in San Luis Obispo for Big Brothers/Big Sisters, where gifts will be delivered to participating children.

All of the students involved in the project said it's well worth the hours they put in. "I am so fortunate to have what I have and be here for a college education. Just the fact that there are 600 children right here who are in need makes me think there is no reason we should have such need among such excess," Hardcastle said. "Some of these requests are really humble – things like school supplies."

Ramirez, this year's coordinator, said she loves the holiday gift drive. "It's a chance to get people involved and show them that you don't have to spend a lot of money or time to make a difference. Buying a gift for a child for \$10 to \$25 – that's like two people giving up going to the movies one night. It's such an easy thing to do."

Students involved in coordinating this year's gift drive are Ramirez, Hardcastle, and Emily Becker, Kara Edwall, Josh Hardester, Daniel Pronsolino, Harmony Quismundo-Newman, Daniel Rivoire and York Shingle.

Clubs and offices which were major donors to the drive include Rotaract, the Records Office, Human Resources, Delta Delta Delta, Campus Crusade, The Establishment, College of Science and Mathematics Ambassadors, the College of Science and Mathematics, Chi Delta Theta, the biological sciences department, and Alpha Gamma Rho.

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Editors please note: A photo of the students with gifts that have been donated is available; contact Teresa Hendrix at thendrix@calpoly.edu to receive a jpg via e-mail.

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